



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2007

CONTACT:  
MICHELLE MOWERY JOHNSON  
(615) 313-4707 / OFFICE

## **LICENSES ON THE LINE FOR THOUSANDS OF TENNESSEANS** *CHILD SUPPORT OFFICIALS CRACK DOWN ON NON-PAYING PARENTS*

NASHVILLE, Tenn.— More than 14,000 parents who are not paying child support face losing their driver's, professional and/or recreational licenses if they don't pay up soon. Letters warning delinquent parents have been sent out, informing them that if they owe at least \$500 in overdue child support and haven't made a payment in more than 90 days, they could lose their license(s).

"It is simply unconscionable for parents to shirk their responsibility and not support their children," said Human Services Commissioner Gina Lodge. "These parents have shown us that they are not willing to abide by the court's order, so we will use the license revocation program to get their attention. It's a strong incentive and a proven, effective tool for the collection of overdue support."

Parents who face the loss of their driver's, professional or recreational licenses include dentists, doctors, boxers, teachers, salesmen and security guards. The largest amount of overdue support subject to license revocation is from a parent in Knox County owing \$209,000. Other top offenders owing more than \$100,000 come from Obion, Williamson, Shelby and Davidson Counties. In all, the 14,000 parents owe a combined \$187 million in overdue child support.

State and federal law allows DHS, which administers the Child Support Program, to revoke the licenses of parents who fail to pay their child support. The notices inform parents that they can prevent revocation if they contact their local child support office and set up payment plans, or repay the past due amount. Traditionally, half of the parents who receive notices end up working with DHS to pay off their child support obligation. However, last year more than 8,000 licenses were revoked due to failure to pay.

This year, data matches between DHS and the Department of Safety identified more than 16,000 driver's licenses of persons meeting the requirements for revocation of their licenses. More than 400 professional licenses issued by the Departments of Commerce and Insurance, Health and Education are also at risk. Approximately 1,000 hunting and fishing licenses will also be subject to revocation.

In addition to the license revocation program, the Child Support division and its partners use enforcement tools such as administrative wage assignment, liens and passport denial to collect support. There are currently 260,000 child support cases in Tennessee. Of these, roughly 57 percent pay their court ordered support in a timely manner.

For more information on the Child Support Program, visit the DHS website at:  
[http://state.tn.us/humanserv/cs/cs\\_main.htm](http://state.tn.us/humanserv/cs/cs_main.htm)

###

CITIZENS PLAZA, 15TH FLOOR  
400 DEADERICK STREET  
NASHVILLE, TN 37248  
615.313.4700